

F 1786

T 57

1786
57
copy 1

INDEPENDENCE OF CUBA.

NO RECONSTRUCTION OR CARPET-BAG GOVERNMENT
UNDER PRETENSE OF PATRIOTIC MOTIVES.

CUBAN PATRIOTS MUST NOT BE MADE TO PAY
SPAIN'S WAR DEBT.

SPEECH

OF

HON. B. R. TILLMAN,
" OF SOUTH CAROLINA,

IN THE

SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES,

FRIDAY, APRIL 15, 1898.

WASHINGTON.

1898.

F1786

.T57

P
A. W. A. Smith

68640

1-3805

SPEECH
OF
HON. B. R. TILLMAN.

The Senate having under consideration the joint resolution (S. R. 149) for the recognition of the independence of the people of Cuba, demanding that the Government of Spain relinquish its authority and government in the Island of Cuba, and to withdraw its land and naval forces from Cuba and Cuban waters, and directing the President of the United States to use the land and naval forces of the United States to carry these resolutions into effect—

Mr. TILLMAN said:

Mr. PRESIDENT: This is a grave, a solemn crisis in the nation's affairs. It is not a time for words to be lightly spoken. Whatever we may do, whichever of the resolutions we have under consideration shall be adopted, the only possible ending to them or to such action will mean war. There is to be war in any event unless Spain ignominiously backs down.

We were told last-night, and no doubt the American people feel it is true, that this is a time for action and not for words. But, Mr. President, the exigency is not so pressing but that we can make the issues clear and say to the world what we mean to do, and say it in words that can not be misconstrued.

I shall address myself to this question in no partisan spirit. We gave an exhibition here some weeks ago of a unanimous House and a unanimous Senate voting \$50,000,000 for the public defense.

Populists, Democrats, Republicans are we,
But we are all Americans to make Cuba free.

I feel that I can claim this for the American people with the exception of a few thousand who live within the purview or within the influence of boards of trade and chambers of commerce and banking houses, and that that sentiment now pulsates in the breast of every true American.

If I shall in my speech present facts and utter words that may have the appearance of partisan bias I disclaim any such purpose, but I hope I shall be able to so measure my words that I will be

given the credit for trying simply to present my views in a clear and unmistakable manner and have those views based on facts and their necessary deductions.

I regret that I can not rise to the high and pure plane which the Senator from Delaware [Mr. GRAY] claimed yesterday to occupy. I have "suspicion" in my nature, Mr. President, and it has been driven into me by the fact that my association with men has led me to know that the angels in this world are very few and far between, and I have heard none of their pinions fluttering in this Chamber since I have been here. [Laughter.] I am frank, and have always been so. I speak that which I feel, and I have always judged other men so until I have been forced by sad experience to know that there are many who, like Talleyrand, use language to conceal their thoughts.

The Senator from Delaware, after announcing in the most positive language his absolute confidence in the President of the United States, and after proclaiming his purpose to cooperate with and assist with all his official power and influence the Executive, seems to forget or to have forgotten that a Washington evening paper of yesterday had in it an account of a conference which he attended yesterday morning, which is part and parcel of the facts from which I shall draw deductions. The Evening Star says:

An important conference was held at the White House this morning, and the subject is believed to have been the question of the Senate and House resolutions. Those engaged were Senators GORMAN, FAULKNER, and GRAY (Democrats), and ALDRICH and ALLISON (Republicans). They had been sent for by the President. They were with the President nearly an hour, and when they left hurried away in carriages to the Capitol.

The Senators admitted that an effort would be made to have the House resolution substituted for that of the Senate when it is passed. They did not, however, say that the President desired this to be done.

It is perfectly legitimate and proper for Senators to confer with the President. The predecessor of the present Executive very rarely conferred with Senators [laughter], and it is an improvement in our public affairs that we have now an Executive who will deign to confer with Senators. However, the milk in the cocoanut is the fact that this conference had as its purpose the substitution of the House resolution for the Senate resolution. Upon that I will comment later on.

Mr. President, the bone of contention here is as to the form of the resolution which we shall adopt which will lead to war. We are told that the House has acted with practical unanimity; that the Executive is ready; and that it is time for the Senate to stop talking and to act, and let slip the dogs of war. It is with no view of defending the Senate—for it needs no defense—that I desire to

direct the attention of the country to the fact that two years ago this body, by a vote of 64 to 6, passed the following resolution:

Concurrent resolution.

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring therein), That, in the opinion of Congress, a condition of public war exists between the Government of Spain and the Government proclaimed and for some time maintained by force of arms by the people of Cuba; and that the United States of America should maintain a strict neutrality between the contending powers, according to each all the rights of belligerents in the ports and territory of the United States.

Resolved further, That the friendly offices of the United States should be offered by the President to the Spanish Government for the recognition of the independence of Cuba.

There we proclaimed by a nearly unanimous vote that there was a government in Cuba, and that was not the Spanish Government.

Mr. STEWART. And a similar resolution passed the House of Representatives.

Mr. TILLMAN. Wait, my friend. I will come to the history of the facts if the Senator from Nevada will just allow me.

This resolution was sent to the House of Representatives, and that body, by a vote of 262 to 17, passed a substitute, and I will read it. It is as follows:

That in the opinion of Congress a state of public war exists in Cuba, the parties to which are entitled to belligerent rights, and the United States should observe a strict neutrality between the belligerents.

Resolved, That Congress deplores the destruction of life and property caused by the war now waging in that island, and believing that the only permanent solution of the contest, equally in the interests of Spain, the people of Cuba, and other nations, would be in the establishment of a government by the choice of the people of Cuba, it is the sense of Congress that the Government of the United States should use its good offices and friendly influence to that end.

Resolved, That the United States has not intervened in struggles between any European governments and their colonies on this continent; but from the very close relations between the people of the United States and those of Cuba, in consequence of its proximity and the extent of the commerce between the two peoples, the present war is entailing such losses upon the people of the United States that Congress is of opinion that the Government of the United States should be prepared to protect the legitimate interests of our citizens by intervention, if necessary.

You see that the House then, with its majority of 150 of the present President's party in power, went further than the Senate. The man who then stood in the way was a so-called Democratic President. Both Houses of Congress by practically unanimous votes declared that there was a "government" in Cuba, because the House later on having failed to have the Senate accept its substitute, concurred in the Senate resolution and passed it. Therefore we have both Houses of that Congress committed to the prop-

osition that even two years ago there existed a "government" in Cuba. What has become of that government? I pause for a reply.

But, Mr. President, the Senate did not stop there. When the President failed to act, there was some mention made in this body of passing a joint resolution and sending it to the President, but it did not obtain much support and dropped out of sight. But last year, after the party which at St. Louis declared in its platform for the independence of Cuba had assumed control of the Government, the Senate, the citadel of liberty in America to-day, passed another resolution, and this time it was a joint resolution. May 20, 1897, by a vote of 41 yeas, to 14 nays, but 2 Democrats voting in the negative, this resolution passed the Senate:

Joint resolution declaring that a condition of public war exists in Cuba, and that strict neutrality shall be maintained.

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That a condition of public war exists between the Government of Spain and the government proclaimed and for some time maintained by force of arms by the people of Cuba, and that the United States of America shall maintain a strict neutrality between the contending powers, according to each all the rights of belligerents in the ports and territory of the United States.

There the Senate again acted. Where has that resolution slept for a year? You all know. It is not my purpose to criticise the men who have their duties to perform at the other end of this Capitol; but, gentlemen, let us keep the record straight. The Senate has acted once, and acted twice, and we are told by the committee of the Senate in its report, which is here accompanying the pending resolution, that if belligerent rights had been granted to Cuba two years ago all of this difficulty would have been obviated and the Cubans would have achieved their own independence. The Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. LODGE], one of the members of that committee, has announced the same proposition in his speech of yesterday in the strongest possible language.

Who is responsible for the condition of war into which we are fast hastening? The Executive, after exhausting diplomacy and being exhausted by diplomacy—because he has got to the end of his rope [laughter]—under the whip and lash of outraged public opinion, after withholding his message time and again, and being told by the members of the two Houses that he must act, sends a message looking to intervention, and the House of Representatives, which has had this resolution of belligerency in its keeping since last May, at last decides to act, and then, with indecent haste and only forty minutes' debate, as though it were the ukase of a czar at the White House, passes a resolution declaring for intervention and probable war, and sends it to this body. Are we to

sit here silent and not discuss the conditions under which this war should be conducted and carried on? No, Mr. President, we have waited long enough; too long. If any harm shall come by reason of waiting, it does not lie with the Senate or at our door. If the Spanish flotilla and the accompanying fleet shall get into American waters and some of our battle ships shall be sent to join the *Maine*, it will not be our fault.

We have acted once. We have been ready to act for a month or more, but other branches of the Government have delayed. Let the responsibility rest there. Now let us decently and in order, and with proper elucidation of the facts and the conditions, discuss this question calmly and in a spirit of patriotism, and arrive at a just and proper conclusion; in other words, let us "be sure we are right and then go ahead."

Mr. President, what is the contention here? What are we discussing? Why the delay? Simply about the form of the resolution which we shall adopt, the results of which are so momentous both to ourselves and to the people to whom we pretend, or to whom we intend, to give relief. It is whether we shall recognize a government which two years ago we declared existed, and which one year ago we reiterated existed, or whether we shall, in obedience to the influences at the White House, leave the matter in a nebulous condition, so that there may be any interpretation put upon it that the Executive hereafter chooses.

The message of the President has been read so often and commented on at such length that I hope the Senate will bear with me if I feel constrained to read a few of these same hackneyed phrases once more and give my comment on them, understanding, gentlemen, that, being a man who means what he says, or tries to—I do not always do it, because I am not immaculate; I am nothing but a sinner, a common ordinary human being—but, as I said, trying to mean what I say and say what I mean, and knowing the importance in a great public paper like this, at a crisis like this, of having the Executive mean what he says and of saying what he means, and having this Senate in its resolutions say what it means and mean what it says, I must, in the performance of a duty, as I said, read some of these extracts and give my deductions from them.

Briefly stated, and culling out the sentences and stringing them together which embrace the recommendations and the opinions of the Executive, we may put it in this way: That the President asked Congress to "authorize and empower him to take measures to secure a full and final termination of the hostilities between the Government of Spain and the people of Cuba, imposing a rational compromise between the contestants by hostile constraint

upon both parties, as well as to impose a truce to insure peace and tranquillity, and for the purpose of securing in the island the establishment of a stable government, and to use the Army and Navy to enforce those recommendations.”

I have culled sentences from the message and strung them together in one consecutive sentence. I know the unfairness of using garbled extracts; but, Mr President, study the message as you may, and, interpreted according to the ordinary meaning of English words, you can not make the message mean anything else than what those words convey. Coupled with the facts that have been brought out here and through the newspapers and in the official reports, I think I can say that the President of the United States has, by his own words and acts, proclaimed that he is not a friend to the idea of free Cuba. He does not believe in the republic, and he has not wanted a republic. It is that belief, implanted in my mind by his own language, which leads me to want this Senate to make the meaning of the cause of this war and its purpose as clear as sunlight.

What are the causes which have led the House of Representatives to linger so long, to wait before recognizing belligerent rights? What are the causes which have prevented one Executive elected by one party and his successor of another party, notwithstanding the obligations of its platform, which he accepted when he was nominated—what, I say, are the influences which have made these men linger and put off the day of redemption for Cuba? I wish to God that I had no “suspicion.” I would that the circumstances were not such as to compel suspicion; but I see in every line of this message a purpose to impose upon the Cubans a recognition of the Spanish debt owned by the American bondholders.

Why does the President want the House resolution passed instead of the Senate resolution? Why, gentlemen, we are even threatened with a veto in the event that we see proper to act according to the responsibilities which have been placed upon us. I say we are threatened with a veto if we dare go forward and proclaim the independence of the Republic of Cuba and fix beyond cavil the status of that people. It is an obligation before the world which we can not shirk.

The Evening Star of yesterday said, and the newspapers of this morning repeated the statement, that—

Should Congress pass a resolution directly recognizing the independence of the Island of Cuba, as proposed in the Senate and House minority resolutions, it is strongly hinted that the President might veto it as interfering with his prerogative to do this. He would, it is intimated, consider it an encroachment upon his functions and rights.

We have recognized the belligerency of the “government of Cuba” twice in this body. Now, when we come to the crucial

test as to whether we shall recognize the independence of the republic, we are told that we will be met with a veto. Are we to be intimidated by that threat? Are we to hesitate and halt and refuse to ratify our previous acts, and to put our resolution in language that means only one thing, and that is that there shall be no reconstruction in Cuba under the auspices of the United States Government?

The newspapers told us—and the Washington newspapers, I find, are nearly always correct in their news—that the House and Senate Committees on Foreign Affairs, pending the sending of the President's message, had practically agreed upon a resolution which recognized the independence of the Republic of Cuba. If that was not true, some member of the committee, if he feels disposed to give out committee secrets—we have had some of them given out, and I do not know why this one should not be—if it is not true, I should be glad to have it denied. [A pause.] I can not, of course, say that "silence gives consent," but we certainly have silence. Why did the Senate committee change the phraseology of the resolution? Why did the House committee come as near as possible to granting to the President all he asked except that they provide for an independent government of the Cuban people by themselves? They gave everything else he asked except that, and then, if that could be reached by intervention, without the use of the Army and the Navy, it would be permissive only; it would not be mandatory to so use them.

The Senate resolution, which we seek to amend so as to purge it of the slightest ambiguity, says that the "people of Cuba are, and of right ought to be, free." Who are the people of Cuba? The President, under his reconstruction policy, which we grant him if this resolution be adopted, will have the right to determine who are the people of Cuba. The Army of the United States once in possession of the island and Spain expelled, we will have the necessity imposed upon the Executive by our consent and through his own wish of having elections held under the auspices of the officers of the Army. Who is going to appoint the returning boards? Who is to count the votes?

Mr. President, perhaps the fact that the State which I have the honor in part to represent has been through that mill once causes me to be more suspicious in regard to the possible outcome of this action and to look forward to a repetition of the scenes which we had in our State when we were reconstructed. God forbid that I should lend by any vote of mine any countenance to any such scheme.

The people who have on the eastern end of the Island of Cuba maintained their independence and kept the Spanish soldiers out for three years during this last war and for ten years during the

previous war, whether they have a government which is stationary or not, have a government such as we have declared existed once, which we have recognized as having the rights of belligerents once, and which we can now well afford to recognize again.

Is it possible that in all the western half of that island, which has been so cruelly devastated, a great many thousands, and possibly hundreds of thousands, of refugees have not escaped death by starvation within the trochas? Did they not escape and flee to the east and scatter throughout that country which has been always held by the patriots? I am almost sure that many of the younger and abler men—in fact, almost all of them—are to-day in the eastern end with rifles in their hands, and they have sworn by the Almighty God to avenge the wrongs of their starving wives and children and of their outraged daughters; and yet you propose to have those gallant soldiers told “You are not the free people of Cuba, but the Spaniards who are in Havana and in the other cities, who have ruined your homes, who have burned your houses and destroyed your industries—in truth, they are to be brought in and recognized as the people of Cuba.”

The question appears to be whether we shall recognize the existing government, whatever may be its obligations, or whether we shall recognize no government, but declare in general terms that the people of Cuba are free, and then go there and have an election under our control and direction so as to set up a government of our making. Will that government have any carpetbaggers among its officers?

For the President of the United States I have a profound respect as a man. His personal record is as clean as that of any man in this country and his honor is above suspicion. But, Mr. President the President of the United States is surrounded by men whom I do suspect, whom I do mistrust. He has, so to speak, some very “wicked partners” [laughter], and I have seen proof, to my mind absolutely conclusive, that the Spanish bondholders have kept down, through their influence in New York and elsewhere, any action by the Executive or by the two bodies of Congress—by the House when it had an opportunity to act in an effective way, and it only acts now because obliged to. I say, having seen evidence of these things, I am compelled to have “suspicions.”

The issue appears to be whether the Cuban bonds, issued by that government through its instrumentality in New York to secure the independence of the island, or the Spanish bonds issued by Spain to conquer the island shall be paid. I do not want, and, so help me God, I will never vote for any proposition which even winks at proposing to impose upon that bleeding island a debt issued by Spain to secure its conquest. We have been told by the

Senator from Massachusetts [Mr. HOAR] that bonds are things which now come around babies' necks when born, and it seems that the people of the whole world are becoming slaves to bondholders of one kind or another; that international syndicates possess more influence than governments; that governments declare peace or levy war at their dictation, or that the governments can not help themselves, and we are to present the spectacle here of leaving the suspicion in the minds of even our own people that such a syndicate exists and our own action is predicated upon their demand. Armenia has been left to the tender mercies of the brutal and fanatical Turk. Greece was struck down and lies bleeding at every pore while the CHRISTIAN POWERS stand idly by held back by the bondholders who hold the Turkish debt. Is this great Republic to be thus disgraced? God forbid that it should sink so low!

L. of C.
 Mr. President, this is the first time in our history that we have ever interfered with any of the colonies of a foreign power in the Western Hemisphere except to recognize their independence. We fought the Mexican war more as a war of conquest than a necessity, because Texas had successfully defended her liberty, and it was not doubtful as to whether or not she could continue to maintain it. While men proclaim that there is no suspicion or purpose or intent to annex Cuba the world outside, which does not judge men by any other code than that which obtains in this day and which is the essence of greed, will say that "you do not mean that when you pass this resolution without recognizing the government now in existence." If we go down there and set up a carpetbag government of our own, or if there are no carpetbaggers among them and we set up a Cuban government, what do we entail upon ourselves?

I desire first to lay down the proposition—the clear, unmistakable doctrine—and let it be recalled to the minds of Senators as to what Monroe meant and said and what we are contending for as the true American policy. I read from President Monroe's famous message:

We owe it, therefore, to candor and to the amicable relations existing between the United States and those powers to declare that we should consider any attempt on their part to extend their system to any portion of this hemisphere as dangerous to our peace and safety. With the existing colonies or dependencies of any European power we have not interfered and shall not interfere. But with the governments who have declared their independence and maintained it, and whose independence we have on great consideration and on just principles acknowledged, we could not view any interposition for the purpose of oppressing them or controlling in other manner their destiny by any European power in any other light than as a manifestation of an unfriendly disposition toward the United States.

There we proclaimed that we would not interfere with the colonies of other powers, and yet we are now going to interfere and

we are going to interfere without first having recognized the independence of the men who brought on the war and maintained it for thirteen years.

I am not going to get into a discussion with well-trained lawyers as to what would be our international obligations under the conditions which they suggest, but I contend that if we do not recognize the independence of the Cuban Government in some form, though that government may be peripatetic, may be moving about, so to speak, we lay ourselves open to the accusation of the European powers of intending something else besides the mere setting up of an independent, stable government of the Cuban people for themselves. The President says:

Such recognition is not necessary in order to enable the United States to intervene and pacify the island. To commit this country now to the recognition of any particular government in Cuba might subject us to embarrassing conditions of international obligation toward the organization so recognized. In case of intervention our conduct would be subject to the approval or disapproval of such government. We would be required to submit to its direction and to assume to it the mere relation of a friendly ally.

He speaks further down in his message of the "attributes of nationality" and of the "interests and relations of the United States with such a government."

We were told by the Senator from Ohio [Mr. FORAKER] that large numbers of these Spanish bonds, for which the Cuban revenues are hypothecated as security, are held in America. Are the holders of those Spanish bonds, who bought them in the open market knowing the danger of their being repudiated or lost by war, here with their agents on this floor and in the other end of the Capitol trying to saddle this debt upon those people? I can not believe it; but what am I to believe?

The papers have told us—I do not know how true the story is—that there have been midnight conferences between Senators and the Spanish minister. There is nothing in the President's message which seeks to make clear his purpose to recognize the independence of these people at all except the brief sentence at the end, which I will now read:

In view of these facts and of these considerations, I ask the Congress to authorize and empower the President to take measures to secure a full and final termination of hostilities between the Government of Spain and the people of Cuba, and to secure in the island the establishment of a stable government, capable of maintaining order and observing its international obligations, insuring peace and tranquillity and the security of its citizens as well as our own.

There is the only possible sentence in the message that looks to Cuban independence at all, and here we have to strain the meaning of his language and take as a fact what can only be implied as to his meaning. All of his other language leads us inevitably to a contrary opinion; and the message must be construed as a

whole. He speaks about "hostile constraint," and "rational compromise," and so on, all looking to some species of pseudo-independence or autonomy or some other humbug by which the Spanish bonds may be saddled upon this sorely distressed island and its people. For the benefit of whom? The bond is stronger than the man; money talks; men are cheap. The sinister influence of the dollar appears to be paramount in this Capitol, and we are to put ourselves on record as to whether we indorse the proposition that the Spanish bonds can by any possibility be saddled on these people under the reconstruction government which is proposed.

But, Mr. President, aside from the moral and legal obligations to other nations which would be imposed on us in the event that we go there and set up a government, taking the island, the corpus, so to speak, and setting up a "stable" government of our own—to which the President himself alludes—even if we recognize such government, with that recognition will go the demand that they must pay our American bondholders, and if we demand that they shall pay bonds held by our citizens, in God's name will not Germany and France and England demand that they shall pay theirs? Suppose that condition of affairs arises, what will be the result?

We expel the Spaniards. We will pacify the island. We will go there ignoring the present Cuban government. We will order an election; we will say it will be an honest election; that there shall be no cheating; no counting in or counting out; no military interference, except to see a free vote and a fair count. And when the representatives of that government meet, who can recognize it as a stable government? Can this Congress do it? Will this Congress act? Under the hypnotic influences which seem abroad in this land, is it at all probable that anything will be done hereafter, after that settlement has been made, except that there will be dicker and barter and trade and coercion on the part of this Government to force a recognition of a part at least of this debt?

Then suppose that we force it, and it becomes one of the infamies for which we will be responsible to God, who is going to collect the interest? The Cubans who are to-day in arms, and most of whom have been for thirteen years, have been driven to the mountains and fastnesses of the forests of Cuba by oppression which meant for them either to become robbers and guerrillas, so to speak, or slaves. They had no alternative. They have resisted oppressive taxation and tyranny in the same manner that the American people resisted it in 1775 and 1776. We will say that you set up a reconstruction government under this scheme which we have coming here from the House, and which is permissible even under the Senate joint resolution as reported by the committee, then what follows?

For a time the debt will be recognized and the interest collected, but so sure as men are men like we are and the Cubans believe that debt is dishonest and oppressive and ought never to have been saddled on them, there will be a revolution and that government will be overthrown, and the refusal to pay the interest and the obligation which will have been imposed on them under this proposition of reconstruction and infamy will entail on us the necessity of entering upon the island and enforcing the obligation just as Egypt has been seized by England to collect the interest on the bonds which her citizens hold as the result of loaning money to the Khedive. Then we will have a nice situation.

The island for a quarter of a century, almost, has been in a state of chronic insurrection, with the Spanish Government trying to maintain supremacy. We propose to take Spain's place and become the policeman of the Western Continent and keep in order on that island the Latin races that have settled there. We can not afford it. Duty demands that we expel the Spanish robbers and tyrants. There our duty ends. We can not afford, Mr. President, to set up any government there. We can not afford to do anything except to recognize the existing government and let them work out their own redemption, as the other Spanish-American Republics have had to do.

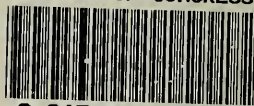
They have had their revolutions and counter revolutions. I do not believe the people of that race are capable of self-government. While Mexico has under the great and magnificent statesman who now dominates her affairs had tranquillity and peace and a stable government for a long time, and is moving forward rapidly in progress, we can not undertake to say that the Cuban people must have a stable government, and that we will make for them a stable government, if we are going there and say in order to have this stable government "you must pay the Spanish debt or some part of it."

If we go there recognizing the existing condition and the government which we have already recognized once, we will approach those people in a spirit of amity and friendliness and fairness and justice which will appeal to them, and we can have influence with them—even with bandits and mulattoes, and the worst element of those struggling for liberty—and we can appeal to them by moral obligation, if nothing else, to be law abiding and civilized. But if we undertake to say that we will set up a "stable government" loaded down with the Spanish debt, and enforce stability by maintaining peace, then we will have to increase our standing Army, and we will have to maintain an army there time out of mind to enforce the collection of an unjust obligation put upon those people. In a word, we will take Spain's place as the oppressor and tyrant.

Mr. President, recognition is an Executive act. It is true we are undertaking now, and I understand that is what the President objects to, to recognize independence which he has refused to recognize. He even refuses to recognize belligerent rights, which would carry with it the legal right to refuse to pay this debt. Through every line of the message and the policy outlined in it there appears nothing to me but bonds, bonds, bonds. And it is because we of South Carolina have had so many bonds of that kind foisted on us in the dreary years of the past, during the era of reconstruction, that I, for one, stand here and protest in the name of American freemen, in the name of decency, of Christianity, of fairness and justice and peace, which can not be maintained on any other basis, against any policy, against the adoption of any resolution, against the leaving out of any word which ought to go in to make it absolutely plain and clear and unmistakable that we do not intend to annex the island; and that we do not intend to interfere with their internal affairs, other than to expel Spain and enable the Cuban patriots to inaugurate, under their own auspices and under their own machinery, a government of the people, by the people, and for the people.

I say I will not vote for any proposition which does not contain these declarations. I will even reject and vote against, in my bounden duty to my people, the Senate joint resolution, unless there is incorporated in it the amendment proposed by the minority, or unless the Senate shall supplement those resolutions for free Cuba by a declaration on our part—and I do not see why we can not do that—that the Spanish debt shall be settled by the Cuban people of their own volition and in their own way, without any coercion on our part. We can not afford to do less. If we recognize the independence, the question of bonds need not arise. We have recognized it once, not independence, but the fact that a government exists there. If we meant what we said then, why not go forward and repeat those words?

Mr. President, I said that whatever happens here, it did not matter what resolution was passed, we are going to have war. I do not want any war. I have not wanted it at all. My people do not want it. The North has had war and had thousands and hundreds of thousands of the flower of its manhood sent home to be buried as the result of that war. We of the South had our own jewels sent back to us in the same way. Both in the Revolutionary war, when my State was overrun from sea to mountain and when her people suffered untold wrong and villainy and oppression, such as no other colony endured, and fought more battles for liberty than were fought in almost all the other States put together; and in the last war, when we passed beneath the harrow,



we have had our fill of bloodletting and of war in its most dreadful form.

We do not want any war. But while the feeling among our people was that of sympathy for the suffering Cubans, such as existed almost everywhere, it could not take shape and did not assume form until that flaming fuse was sent abroad throughout this land which followed the explosion of the torpedo or mine under the *Maine*. That fuse flamed and flared and sizzled while the people held their breath. There was no bomb attached at the time. The Senator from Vermont [Mr. PROCTOR], by his calm, dispassionate, and almost judicial statement of facts, which appealed to the sentimentality and Christian charity and philanthropy and sympathy and mercy of every man worthy the name, furnished the bomb.

The bomb is here, the fuse is attached to it and lighted, and it is approaching an explosion. The explosion will come whether I vote for the pending joint resolution or not. I hope to God I will be able to get the Senate to incorporate something in it or to amend it so as to allow me to vote for it. But, as I said, whether I vote for it or not, the people I represent are to-day a unit, the American hearts within us throb and pulsate with the sense of wrong and indignation, and the blood which we inherited from Revolutionary sires tingles with the demand for justice upon the assassins who sent those American sailors to their death.

In the war that is now inevitable South Carolinians will not be laggards in upholding the flag of our country or in carrying it to victory in so righteous a cause.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



0 015 819 608 6

